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Letter dated 15 October 2001 from the Permanent Representative of Belgium to the United Nations addressed to the Secretary-General

I have the honour to bring to your attention the statement issued on 9 October 2001 by the Presidency of the European Union on behalf of the European Union concerning the Western Balkans (see annex).

I should be grateful if you would have the text of this letter and its annex distributed as a document of the Security Council.

(*Signed*) Jean **De Ruyt**
Permanent Representative of Belgium to the United Nations

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Annex to the letter dated 15 October 2001 from the Permanent Representative of Belgium to the United Nations addressed to the Secretary-General

[Original: English and French]

Statement issued on 9 October 2001 by the Presidency of the European Union on behalf of the European Union concerning the Western Balkans

The events of 11 September and their developments have reinforced more than ever the need for the countries of the region to resolve, by democratic means, all matters still outstanding. This will enable the Union to accelerate further the region's stabilization and integration within the European structures.

The Council expressed its concern about the insufficient progress made by the Former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia in implementing the 13 August 2001 Framework Agreement. The Council stressed that the full and faithful implementation of the Framework Agreement by all the parties concerned remains the only guarantee of a return to peace and stability in the country, as well as national reconciliation between all the communities, respecting the territorial integrity and unity of the country. Unless the Framework Agreement is implemented, the process of rapprochement of the Former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia with the European Union will be compromised. The Council therefore expects all democratic forces in the country to continue to engage fully and constructively in this parliamentary process. It appeals to the Parliament to approve all the constitutional and legislative provisions of the Framework Agreement, as agreed by the parties, at the earliest opportunity, thus paving the way for its full implementation. Moreover, the Council is waiting for the Government of the Former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia to swiftly take the necessary measures to find an effective solution to the problem of an amnesty for the rebels and for the process of the return of the security forces to be coordinated with the representatives of the international community.

The Council repeated that the European Union remains determined to play an active role in the implementation of the Agreement. It took note in this regard of the Commission proposal to extend the geographical sphere of competence of the European Agency for Reconstruction to the Former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia and agreed to determine its position on the proposal rapidly. It stressed, however, that its assistance in the reforms being carried out by the authorities of the Former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia is conditional upon the satisfactory conclusion of the parliamentary process of constitutional revision. In this context, the Council notes that the conditions for convening a donors' conference have not yet been fulfilled.

The Council appreciated the vigorous support given by the United Nations Security Council for the establishment, at the request of the Government in Skopje, of a multinational security presence in the Former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia. The Council welcomed the North Atlantic Council's decision to authorize the deployment of the Operation Amber Fox force to provide that presence and contribute to the security of the international monitors deployed by the Organization

for Security and Cooperation in Europe and the European Union whose number will also be increased.

The Council also welcomed the excellent work carried out by François Léotard, the European Union's Special Representative, under the authority of Javier Solana, High Representative, in the conclusion of the Framework Agreement of 13 August 2001, working in close collaboration with James Pardew, the Special Envoy of the President of the United States. It also praised François Léotard's role in coordinating the implementation of the Agreement on the ground.

The Council confirmed the importance which the European Union attaches to a massive turnout for the poll on 17 November 2001 on the part of all communities in Kosovo, to ensure that they are appropriately and effectively represented in the new democratically elected institutions. That will enable the communities of Kosovo to work together in creating a stable, democratic and multi-ethnic Kosovo. With that in mind the Council welcomed the registration of an encouraging number of Serbian electors in Kosovo in recent weeks. The Council encouraged the Belgrade authorities to maintain their cooperative attitude, in particular by officially stating their support for the participation of Kosovo Serbs in the ballot and stepping up their cooperation with the United Nations Interim Administration Mission in Kosovo and the International Security Force in Kosovo.

The Council again stressed the importance of full implementation of the Covic plan for Southern Serbia, including the introduction of confidence-building measures.

Recalling its previous conclusions, particularly those of 22 January 2001, the Council stressed the importance of a constructive and substantive dialogue, in a general federal context, between the Belgrade and Podgorica authorities, to decide on new constitutional arrangements for relations between the components of the Federation that are acceptable to all parties. That would also promote beneficial participation by the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia in the Stabilization and Association Process.

The Council welcomed the holding of the second regional conference of the Stability Pact in Bucharest on 25 and 26 October 2001, from which it expects a positive political signal regarding the countries of South-East Europe in favour of continuing reform and regional cooperation.

The Council expressed satisfaction at the participation for the first time of the five Western Balkan countries in the forthcoming European Conference on combating terrorism to be held in Brussels on 20 October 2001.

In accordance with its conclusions of 11 June 2001, the Council confirmed (without debate) the terms of reference of the EU-Albania Consultative Task Force and welcomed the fact that its inaugural meeting is to be held shortly.